



**a place of mind**

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS**

### **1. What is a strike / job action?**

A strike or job action occurs after unionized employees take a positive strike vote and the union that represents them serves the university with strike notice. When strike notice is served, it means that union members may legally withdraw their services (stop working).

A strike or job action can take on many forms and is often of an escalating nature. This can include:

- Withdrawal of services to attend “information sessions” or to engage in leafleting during scheduled work hours
- An overtime ban (refusal to work overtime hours)
- Rotating pickets (striking union members carrying pickets may picket outside one university building and then move to another)
- Campus-wide pickets (striking union members picket outside the entrances to the university and all members of that union are on strike – except those designated as essential)

### **2. Is there currently job action at UBC?**

CUPE 116 the union representing 2,100 technicians/research assistants and other service positions served 72-hour strike notice. The University is preparing for some form of job action as early as October 4, 2012.

### **3. What are my responsibilities as a student?**

As a student you are required to inform yourself of your rights and responsibilities and to keep apprised of information and the changing nature of the job action. It is essential that you read:

- The Academic Position of Students in Case of a Strike (found at [www.vpstudents.ubc.ca](http://www.vpstudents.ubc.ca))
- Frequently asked questions for students posted on [the Vice-President, Students' page](#)
- Daily updates posted on [www.ubc.ca/jobaction](http://www.ubc.ca/jobaction)

### **4. How will job action affect me?**

In the event of a strike or job action, the University will remain open for students, maintain instruction in all courses, provide access to core library services and internet connectivity, oversee examinations as

scheduled and provide student services. However, a job action may affect your learning environment. Some of the possible effects are:

- It will probably take longer to get assignments and feedback on your completed work from your professors.
- There may be tutorials, discussion groups, seminars and course related activities that are rescheduled or canceled.
- There may be fewer opportunities to interact with your professors.
- There may be fewer academic resources as a result of teaching assistants withdrawing services.
- The University may need to reduce hours of operation for the library and other services.
- There may be an impact on the study space available for students on campus.

Hours of operation for campus and student services, and Translink service may be affected. Please visit [www.ubc.ca/jobaction](http://www.ubc.ca/jobaction) regularly for up-to-date information.

If bus service to campus is affected because of job action, a shuttle service will be available to people with disabilities or medical conditions unable to walk to campus from the drop-off point. Please refer to the 'latest news' section of [www.ubc.ca/jobaction](http://www.ubc.ca/jobaction).

## **5. Will there be picket lines?**

Picket lines can be set up either as rotating pickets, or campus-wide pickets. Rotating pickets can be set up outside buildings in which the striking union members work, and can be moved at any time. Campus-wide pickets can also be set up off University property, at the UBC Gates.

In the event picket lines are set up, assume all academic activities are continuing. You are expected to come to campus and make every effort to attend class and/or your examinations unless you choose not to cross a picket line as a matter of conscience and have advised your Dean of this decision. Students choosing not to cross picket lines must, within two working days of the commencement of a strike or prior to their first exam, whichever comes first, inform the Dean of the Faculty in which they are registered or in the case of graduate students, the Dean of the Faculty offering their program of study. Students must inform the Dean in person or in writing (i.e. letter or e-mail) that they will not be attending classes or writing examinations during the strike. Students must provide their full names, their UBC student IDs, and the course(s) in which they are currently registered. Contact information for Faculties for this purposes can be found on the [Vice-President, Students](#) website under strike information for students or in the document titled the "Academic Position of Students in Case of a Strike".

The location of pickets can change quickly, so visit [www.ubc.ca/jobaction](http://www.ubc.ca/jobaction) for up-to-date information.

## **6. How will I know if there is a picket line at a building?**

You can check [www.ubc.ca/jobaction](http://www.ubc.ca/jobaction) for information on the location of pickets. However, the locations of picket lines can change quickly so it is your responsibility to come to campus and make every effort to attend your classes, labs and exams including making use of alternative building entrances that are free of pickets. Students who choose not to cross a picket line as a matter of conscience and have advised their Dean of this decision will be excused from attending the class/writing an examination ONLY if a

picket line is set up in the location of the class/examination at the scheduled time of the class/examination and all building entrances are picketed.

### **7. What should I expect when I approach a picket line?**

You can expect that union staff and their supporters on the picket line will ask you to support their cause by not crossing picket lines. However, the choice to cross is yours. You may find it easier to cross with one or more of your friends.

Allow extra time to get to class, you may experience some delays in crossing a picket line.

### **8. Will I be prevented from crossing the picket line?**

No. UBC expects that students will be respected in their decision to cross a picket line.

If you witness or experience threatening or inappropriate verbal or physical conduct by an individual on a picket line, you should report it to Human Resources (604.822.8111) and Vice President, Students office (604.822.3644 or [vpsassist@exchange.ubc.ca](mailto:vpsassist@exchange.ubc.ca)). If immediate assistance is required call 911.

### **9. I don't want to cross the picket line. What do I need to do?**

If you choose not to cross the picket line, you must inform the Dean of the Faculty in which you are registered that you intend not to cross the picket line.

Students choosing not to cross picket lines must, within two working days of the commencement of a strike or prior to their first exam, whichever comes first, inform the Dean of the Faculty in which they are registered or in the case of graduate students, the Dean of the Faculty offering their program of study. Students must inform the Dean in person or in writing (i.e. letter or e-mail,) that they will not be attending classes or writing examinations during the strike. Students must provide their full names, their UBC student IDs, and the course(s) in which they are currently registered. Contact information for Faculties for this purpose can be found on the Vice-President, Students under strike information for students or in the document titled the "Academic Position of Students in Case of a Strike".

You may not declare your intentions retroactively.

If you do not inform your Faculty, the University will assume that you are attending all examinations, classes and course-related activities.

Ensure you have read the "Academic Position of Students in Case of a Strike".

Please note that even if you decide not to cross the picket lines, you are required to come to campus to determine whether there is a picket line at all entrances to the building in which your class, lab or exam is held at its scheduled time, or if there are picket lines set up at all entrances to the University.

**10. Are the academic standards different for students who choose to cross a picket line and those who don't?**

Academic standards should be consistent for all students, whether or not they cross a picket line. Students are responsible for learning any material they may have missed as a result of a labour disruption.

The only course-related material that will not be examinable or assessable is material uniquely available in a classroom or lab and that is not covered in make-up sessions.

Students who miss an essential component and/or a scheduled examination as a result of refusing to cross a picket line will be expected to attend make-up sessions and/or to write deferred or supplemental examinations. Especially in degree programs with professional accreditation requirements, graduation depends upon completing essential material.

**11. I have informed my Faculty that I will not cross a picket line. What do I do now?**

Students who have declared that they will not cross a picket line must determine for themselves that there is a picket line and no alternative entrance to the building for each class, lab or exam.

The job action can change quickly so you are required to come to campus to determine whether there is a picket line at all entrances to the building in which your class, lab or exam is held at its scheduled time, or if there are picket lines set up at all entrances to the University.

Students are responsible for staying informed about their responsibilities and the job action at UBC, and should check [www.ubc.ca/jobaction](http://www.ubc.ca/jobaction) daily. Important student specific information is available on the Vice President, Students website at [www.vpstudents.ubc.ca](http://www.vpstudents.ubc.ca).

**12. Does using the internet during job action constitute crossing the picket line?**

Use of the internet, in whatever form – whether it is Interchange or the UBC website, is not crossing the picket line.

**13. My course instructor has informed our class that he/she will not cross the picket line and will not teach classes/administer examinations in the event of a strike. I have decided that I will cross the picket line. What happens?**

In the event of job action, the University will take every reasonable measure to maintain instruction in all courses, provide access to the core library services and internet connectivity, and oversee examinations as scheduled.

Faculty members are responsible for teaching their courses and students are responsible for fulfilling course requirements. However, the University respects the right of students or faculty members, as a matter of conscience, to refuse to cross a picket line in a labour dispute.

Assume your classes will continue during job action. Each Faculty will endeavour to provide instructors to teach classes and invigilate examinations for faculty members who have declared that they will not cross a picket line.

Distributed by the UBC Strike Preparedness Committee on October 2, 2012.

FAQs will be updated regularly, please see [www.ubc.ca](http://www.ubc.ca) and click on information for Students

**14. Will choosing not to cross a picket line affect my academic record?**

Informing your Dean of your intention not to cross a picket line will not become part of your academic record.

**15. Who do I talk to if I have concerns about my academic situation because of strike related action?**

You should first attempt to resolve your concern with your Department Head or, Faculty or School's advising office.

If you have sought to resolve your course-related or program-related concerns within your Department or Faculty, but feel that you have been treated unfairly, the University has designated an Academic Arbiter. Dr. Michael Feeley, a senior faculty member, has been designated as Academic Arbiter during this labour dispute. Administrative support to Professor Feeley will be provided by Lindsey Kovacevic who can be reached by email at [lindsey.kovacevic@ubc.ca](mailto:lindsey.kovacevic@ubc.ca).

**16. What if my academic program does not require attending classes or examinations – do I still need to inform the Dean's office?**

If your academic activities do not require attending classes or being on campus and you intend to continue your studies, then you do not have to inform the Dean's office.

**17. Where will I be able to eat on campus?**

If there is rotating job action, Food Services will remain open, unless there are picket lines around the buildings where there are Food Services operations. The Student Union Building will remain open, and we expect AMS food service outlets to be operational.

Check [ubc.ca/jobaction](http://ubc.ca/jobaction) for updated information.

**18. My children are in UBC Daycare. Will it remain open?**

For issues relating to Child Care Services and whether the centres are open during job action, parents should call the general information line at 604-822-5343. The outgoing voicemail message will be updated to provide the most current information available.

**19. Will transit services be impacted during job action?**

If there are pickets at the main University entrances, all Translink vehicles will stop at the Blanca Loop. (West 8th Avenue at Blanca St.) You will need to make your way onto campus from that location. During job action allow extra time to get to class.

Transit access to campus can change quickly, so monitor @ubcnews and @translink for up-to-the-minute information.

A shuttle bus will be available for students and employees with disabilities and access issues.

## **20. Can I still drive and park on campus?**

If you drive, there may be delays entering through University Gates. Allow yourself some extra time, as it will take longer to cross the picket line. Be prepared and be patient. Travel with a friend.

All parking facilities on campus will remain open and UBC Traffic and Parking rules remain in effect. Parking will be enforced, so faculty and staff should make sure that a valid parking permit is prominently displayed in their vehicle's front window.

## **21. Will I still have to pay for parking during job action?**

Yes. Parking locations and rates can be found at <http://parking.ubc.ca>.

## **22. Are there rules for conduct during job action?**

Yes, please see our "What is expected of me?" page for full information.

## **23. Will I be disciplined by the university for voicing my opinion on social media sites during job action?**

Open discussion of issues is encouraged at UBC, and we expect that all dialogue and debate at UBC will be respectful and open. The right to strike is legal, the right to respect a picket line is legal, as is the decision to cross a picket line. No one should suffer discrimination or threats from exercising their legal rights.

The university expects members of the community to maintain a respectful environment for working, learning and living, in which respect, civility, opportunity and inclusion are valued.

We are all expected to uphold these principles in our communications and interactions with fellow community members and the public, in all university-related settings.

Read more about conduct on our "What is expected of me?" page.